

The Fort Riley Historical Symposium celebrating the 150th anniversary of Fort Riley was a tremendous success and we salute the collaborative initiative between Fort Riley and Kansas State University for its leadership in promoting and hosting this important event. This symposium was the initiative of the Museum Division of Fort Riley University.

The symposium theme was "A celebration of Ft. Riley" and offered perspectives on Ft. Riley's place in national defense and American life and times.

The event was inaugurated with University President Jon Wefald hosting a reception and dinner at the KSU Alumni Center the evening of 10 September. The next morning, the symposium began with remarks from Dr. Wefald, which focused on a brief historical overview to Ft. Riley. The keynote speaker for the symposium was Dr. Jeffrey Clarke, Chief Historian from the U. S. Army Center of Military History. Dr. Clarke spoke on fort's and today's army. His discussion of this subject placed the evolution of Army installations from the mid-19th century to the present and offered insight to how Department of the Army level thinking related to present and future post utilization.

Four papers were presented on Thursday afternoon dealing with Ft. Riley in the 19th century. Dr. Leo Oliva, Ft. Hays State University Emeritus, spoke on Bennett C. Riley's military escort down the Santa Fe Trail in 1829. This was followed by Douglas Scott, U.S. National Park Service, spoke on campaign tactics used by the Army in the mid and late 19th century Army. He supported his discussion with archaeological evidence from the Hancock Expedition of 1867 and Custer's Little Bighorn campaign of 1876. Professor William Young, Maple Woods Community College, provided an informative and analytic talk of Ft. Riley involvement in antebellum Kansas politics. Dr. Dennis Showalter, Colorado College, concluded the afternoon session by discussing in broad terms the U. S. cavalry's role as an imperial police force. He compared these actions with other nation's such as Great Britain.

On Thursday evening, the commanding general of Ft. Riley, BG Dennis Hardy, hosted a reception at the historic Territorial Capital of Kansas. The affair brought together symposium participants, members of the K-State, Manhattan and Junction City communities.

The concluding day began with a paper presented by Dr. William Dobak, U. S. Army Center of Military History, who discussed the fort's economic dynamic in the development and change to the frontier Kansas economy. Ms. Lisa Borowski, a Kansas State University doctoral candidate in history, offered insight into the evolving relationship between cavalymen and their horses during the inter-war years. Her paper analyzed the branches search for identity and mission as it was confronted by increasing mechanization. Dr. Bonnie Lynn-Sherow, Kansas State University, spoke on ethnic history and specifically, Native

Americans who served at Ft. Riley during World War II. The final paper for this session was from Dr. Sherry Smith, Southern Methodist University on three case studies of Army families in 19th century Army life.

The Friday luncheon program featured Scott Hall, post archaeologist, who gave an overview to archaeological mandates on the installation and specifically what had been done at Army City. This site was a commercial zone activity next to Camp Funston, which functioned during World War I.

The theme for Friday afternoon was Ft. Riley in the 20th century and beyond. Dr. Brian Linn, Texas A&M University, offered an overview to the innovation and reaction to the U.S. Cavalry from the Civil War to Vietnam. Dr. Timothy Nenninger, National Archives and Records Administration, discussed the lessons and legacy of professional military education from the late 19th to post-World War I era. Dr. Robert Rook, Ft. Hays State University, offered insight into how the Cavalry School and the branch were reacting to the 'small wars', which were occurring at the turn of the last century. William McKale, Director of the Museum Division, Ft. Riley University, presented the final paper of this session. McKale's paper focused on the evolution of Ft. Riley from its Cavalry School days of the 1920s to its role as a power projection platform and Warfighting Center at the start of the 21st century.

The final panel session was a discussion and retrospective from a group of former Ft. Riley generals. These gentlemen were brought together specifically to relate their experiences while serving at the post. Members of the panel included: emcee, MG Neal Creighton, MG Gordon Duquemin, LTG Marvin Fuller, MG Phillip Kaplan, LTG Thomas Rhame, LTG Ronald Watts, and LTG Leonard Wishart III. BG Dennis Hardy, current commander of the 24th Infantry Division and Fort Riley.

The symposium was a tremendous success in bringing together scholars, the university, military and surrounding communities to discuss the past, present and future significance of Ft. Riley. This venue also provides a tremendous platform from which to build further programs and co-operative initiatives to enhance educational pursuits and quality of life associated with the Ft. Riley experience.